



News Release

**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARINE MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Vietnam War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Merlin R. Allen, 20, of Madison, Wis., will be buried on June 29, in Washburn, Wis. On June 30, 1967, Allen was aboard a CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter attempting to insert a U.S. Marine Corps reconnaissance team into hostile territory in Thua Thien-Hue Province, Vietnam. As the aircraft approached the landing zone, it was struck by enemy fire, causing the aircraft to catch fire and crash land. Most of the reconnaissance team survived; however, Allen, and four others died in the crash.

In 1993 and 1994, joint U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams investigated the case in Thua Thien-Hue Province. The teams interviewed local villagers who claimed to have discovered an aircraft crash site in the nearby forest while searching for firewood in 1991. The team surveyed the area finding aircraft wreckage; however, the wreckage could not be associated with a CH-46A.

Throughout the 1990s, joint U.S./ S.R.V. teams continued to investigate the loss in Thua Thien-Hue Province. In 1999, the team re-interviewed the local villagers from the 1993 and 1994 investigation. The joint team surveyed the crash site again, this time uncovering aircraft wreckage consistent with a CH-46A helicopter.

In 2012, a joint U.S./ S.R.V. recovery teams began excavating the crash site and recovered human remains, aircraft wreckage, and military equipment that correlated the CH-46A helicopter Allen was on.

To identify the remains, scientists from Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) used circumstantial evidence and dental comparisons.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo or call (703) 699-1420.

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